

New Jersey Marine Digest

May 2018

**Size and
Possession
Limits**
page 21



A Summary of Recreational Regulations and
Marine Fish and Shellfish Management Information
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hotlines

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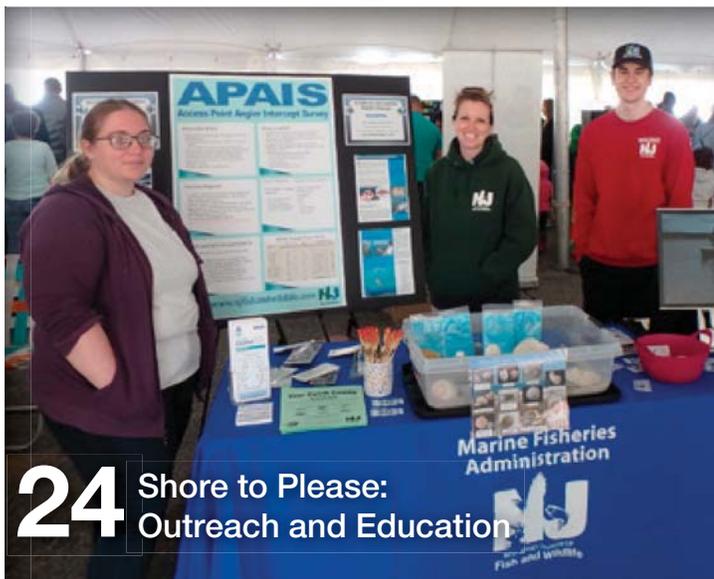
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Director's Message

LARRY HERRIGHTY

Last year, New Jersey's challenge to the proposed summer flounder regulations made history. It was the first time that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) decision to deny a state's proposed season framework and find a state "out of compliance" was overturned by the Secretary of Commerce. This decision resulted in New Jersey implementing our proposed summer flounder season of 125 days with an 18-inch minimum and three fish limit. The post-season analysis of our harvest, through surveys of recreational anglers, found that New Jersey did not exceed our total allowable harvest. Overall, summer flounder harvest was down coastwide, allowing a more liberal season this year.

The unprecedented decision by the Secretary of Commerce caused shock waves up and down the coast. Although I am pleased with the Secretary's decision, criteria for challenging the ASMFC are tough to meet. And quite frankly, the deliberative and collaborative ASMFC process is thorough and most often fair to all states, considering the difficult decisions that must be made.

It is important for all member states to work within the ASMFC structure and to accept the collective decisions, based on sound data, necessary to ensure our migratory fish species are conserved. Anglers should not expect to, nor should we desire to, buck the system every time a decision does not go our way. After all, the goal is to rebuild the fishery for better fishing in the future.

Over the past year I learned just how complicated marine fisheries management is. New Jersey's biologists, biologists in the other coastal states and the ASMFC staff all spend a great deal of time collecting data, crunching numbers, running the fisheries models and putting in long hours at meetings to collectively come up with appropriate harvest recommendations. Commission members must set harvest quotas that protect the fisheries resource for the future and satisfy the present interests of the commercial and recreational anglers. That is not an easy job.

The most significant way you can help the process is by providing the data to feed the models. In this *Digest* there is a reminder (page 25) about the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS). If you are approached by one of our employees at dockside, please take the time to participate in the survey, even if you had a bad day of fishing. Days when you catch little or nothing are important. If only successful anglers participate in the survey, our harvest numbers will be inflated and future seasons may be affected negatively. You can also participate in our Volunteer Angler Survey using your home computer or smartphone.

One of New Jersey's biggest marine fisheries challenges is having adequate staff levels to gather the data, do the research and make our case at these interstate fisheries meetings. Although retirement has stolen from us several valuable personnel in recent years, I am happy to report progress. This spring Fish and Wildlife's new Marine Fisheries Administrator, Joe Cimino, takes the helm. Joe was the assistant director of Virginia's Marine Resources Commission and is quite *the catch!*

As we welcome spring, please join me in welcoming Joe to our ranks as he takes on the challenging administrative responsibilities associated with managing our marine resources. He has a great crew to work with and a body of anglers eager to reap the rewards of his team's work. So let's go fishing! 

Larry Herrighty is the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.



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To protect and manage the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.

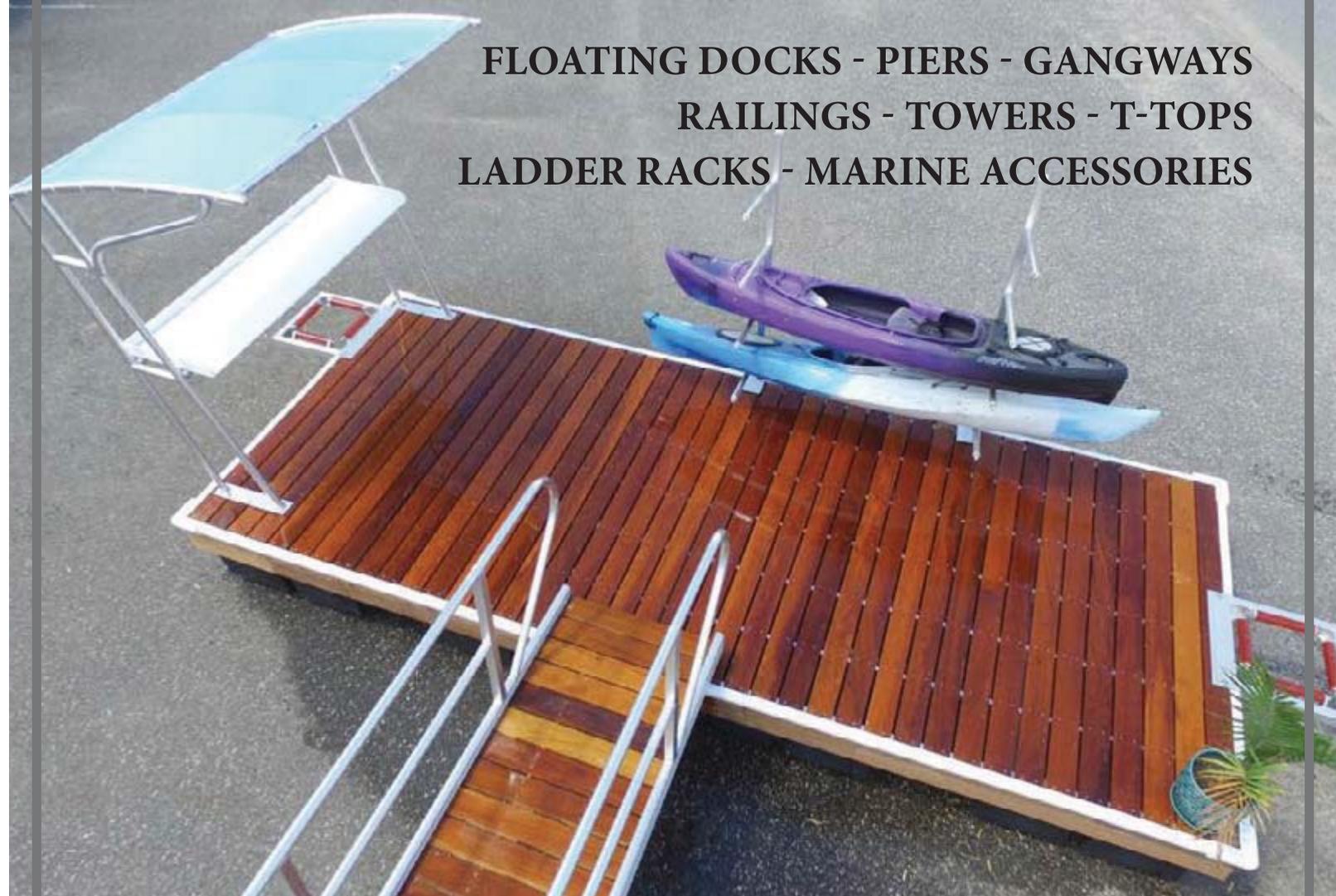
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- To maintain New Jersey's rich variety of fish and wildlife species at stable, healthy levels and to protect and enhance the many habitats on which they depend.
- To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.
- To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.

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River Herring Status: Research Holds the Key

By: Matthew Heyl, *Marine Fisheries Specialist*
Courtney Laws, *Hourly Fisheries Biologist*

River herring aren't as well-known recreationally as striped bass or fluke. In the past, anglers used them for bait, not realizing the importance of this species. Read on to learn more about these fish including their value, population decline and current research.

Importance of River Herring

From the same family as American shad, river herring (a collective term for alewife and blue-back herring) are anadromous fish that spend most of their adult lives at sea, returning to freshwater in the spring to spawn. Most abundant in the mid-Atlantic and Northeast, river herring spawn in rivers, lakes and tributaries from northeastern Newfoundland to South Carolina.

River herring were once an important commercial fishery in New Jersey. Looking at landings dating back to 1950, commercial landings peaked around 42,000 pounds in 1990 and were the lowest in 2003 at around 200 pounds. Population declines and lack of data have contributed to the current regulations which prohibit the harvest or possession of river herring in all New Jersey waters.

Courtney Laws sets a 100-foot seine net on the Great Egg Harbor River. Common fish caught here include Atlantic silversides, bay anchovies, spottail shiners, blue crabs and mummichogs.



Chris Bartlett/Maine Sea Grant

The Decline of River Herring

The 2007 coast-wide stock assessment determined that river herring stocks were low and in need of recovery. Dams and other impediments that block spawning rivers, overfishing and habitat degradation have contributed to the river herring population decline. In response to the stock assessment, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) passed an amendment prohibiting all recreational and commercial river herring harvest beginning January 1, 2013, unless a state had developed a sustainable fishery management plan approved by ASMFC. Since data was not available for New Jersey to develop a plan, the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife began studying river herring in our waters.

Survey History

The key to finding ways to increase river herring populations is research. When funding was received in 2012, Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries (Marine Fisheries) began a three-year research project to collect biological data and determine indices for adult and juvenile river herring abundance on the Rancocas Creek and Maurice River watersheds.

During the first year of the program, staff performed test-sampling at numerous sites on both river systems with various sampling methods including gill netting, seining, fish ladder monitoring and electrofishing.

After three years, the project was evaluated and revised accordingly. The first change discontinued sampling at the Union Lake Dam since it was determined that few river herring were utilizing the fish ladder. The second change replaced the Rancocas Creek with the Great Egg Harbor River system. The decision to eliminate the Rancocas Creek was made due to the duplication of similar sampling during the Marine Fisheries' Striped Bass Recruitment Survey on the Delaware River. Both the Great Egg Harbor and Maurice Rivers contain a Denil-style fish ladder that allows biologists to view and study what species of fish pass into either Lake Lenape (Great Egg Harbor River) or Union Lake (Maurice River). In addition, the Great Egg Harbor River allows staff to survey and compare an Atlantic coastal drainage with a Delaware estuary drainage (Maurice River).

River Systems

The Rancocas Creek, a tributary of the Delaware River, has two branches that run through the Pine-lands National Reserve. The main stem of the river is 8.3 miles long; the north branch is 28.3 miles long and the south branch is 21.7 miles. Since 1975, spawning migrations of adult alewife and blueback herring have been confirmed in the mainstem as well as the north and south branches.

The Maurice River is the second longest and largest tributary to the Delaware Bay. It is 50 miles long and drains 386 square miles. Its mouth to the Delaware Bay is surrounded by salt marshes and serves as spawning and feeding grounds, nursery areas, and migratory routes for important recreational and commercial fish and invertebrates including alewife and blueback herring. Since 1977, Fish and Wildlife has confirmed

spawning migrations of adult alewife and blueback herring below the Union Lake Dam.

The Great Egg Harbor River is one of the major rivers traversing the Pinelands. It is 55 miles long and drains 308 square miles of wetlands into the Great Egg Harbor Bay and Atlantic Ocean. It serves as spawning and feeding grounds, nursery areas and migratory routes for important recreational and commercial fish and invertebrates including alewife.

Types of Sampling



A gill net is set by Hugh Carberry, Bill Maxwell and Courtney Laws below the Union Lake Dam on the Maurice River. Common catches include white perch, striped bass, channel and white catfish.

Gill Netting for adult river herring begins in March and runs through May. Alewife are the earliest to be netted as they are more tolerant of spawning in cooler water temperatures. A few weeks later blueback herring arrive. Gill nets are set weekly on each river system and are left in the water for one and a half hours on average. When pulling gill nets, biologists immediately put collected fish into a circular live well with a touch of salt. This minimizes the stress on the fish and greatly improves the chance of survival. River herring biological data collected includes fork and total length, sex and spawning stage. All other fish collected are measured and released. Common catches besides river herring are white perch, catfish and striped bass.



Marine fisheries staff retrieves a 100-foot seine net on the Great Egg Harbor River. Southern species caught during the survey have included gag grouper, mangrove snapper and Florida pompano.

Seine Netting for juvenile river herring begins in July and runs through October. Each river system has predetermined sites that range in

salinity from freshwater to saltwater and are sampled twice a month. The seine net is set and retrieved with a boat, creating a horseshoe loop in the net. All fish are identified to species and counted. A subsample of the catch is measured by fork length. Common catches besides river herring are Atlantic silversides, bay anchovies, spottail shiners, blue crabs and mummichogs.



An electrofishing survey of the Millstone River, conducted here by Fish and Wildlife seasonal staff Scott Catton (L) and Steve Tourto of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, revealed the presence of blueback herring for the first time in spring of 2016.

Electrofishing by boat for juvenile river herring occurred on the Rancocas Creek during 2013 and 2014. Electrofishing is when electrical currents pass through positive and negative electrodes hung partially submerged in the water. As the boat moves, the electrical field travels through the water, temporarily stunning the fish. The lack of hard bottom made seine netting difficult on the northern and southern branches of the creek. Electrofishing is an extremely effective way of capturing and releasing juvenile river herring alive. Although electrofishing techniques were used on the Rancocas Creek until biologists ended sampling there, electrofishing equipment could not be used on other river systems due to the presence of salt water.

Data collected from all sampling methods listed above are similar. All fish caught are identified and counted; a sub-sample is measured. Other important data collected include water quality levels and atmospheric conditions which are recorded at each sampling site. Types of water quality information recorded are salinity, water temperature, dissolved oxygen and pH. Atmospheric conditions include air temperature, tide, weather conditions and moon phase.

River Herring Survey Results

Through 2017, Fish and Wildlife has completed five years of the River Herring Survey. For the gill net season, a total of 687 adult alewife and 13 adult blueback herring have been caught along with other species. For the seine season, a total of 4,305 juvenile alewife and 10,161 juvenile blueback herring have been caught. Percent frequencies and geometric means are calculated for both species.



Ladyfish

NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife



Crevalle Jack

Joe Reynolds/NY Harbor Nature.com

These species caught during sampling are uncommon along New Jersey. Ladyfish are found in tropical or subtropical regions. The crevalle jack can grow quite large and frequents tropical to temperate waters.

A geometric mean is the average of a set of products. This calculation provides the catch-per-unit-effort which allows biologists to measure the abundance of a target species. When comparing geometric means from different years, changes in the values signify changes to the species' true abundance.

For both rivers, the 2016 gill netting produced the highest geometric means of river herring for the time series. The 2017 seining season, juvenile alewife index was above average on the Great Egg, while juvenile blueback herring index was above average for the Maurice River. The numbers of both the juvenile alewife seine-netted on the Great Egg and juvenile blueback herring seine-netted on the Maurice River were the highest recorded in both river systems since bi-weekly sampling began in 2016. More years of sampling will help provide a better estimate of population trends.

Common and Rare Catches

Marine biologists record data on all fish caught, just not river herring. Common catches include many types of bait and game fish common to New Jersey such as Atlantic silverside (22,204 sampled), striped bass (192) and winter flounder (28.) On occasion, some uncommon or tropical species not typically seen in New Jersey's marine waters are caught, primarily in late-August through September when water temperatures are at their highest. These species are native to the warmer waters of the southeast U.S. coast.

Sustainability and Restoration of River Herring

Over the past 20 years, there has been a severe decline in river herring populations. The River Herring Survey was designed to enhance current understanding of overall stock levels and to gain information specific to the New Jersey populations. Fishery surveys like these are the groundwork for the overall stock assessment process where data collected is used to better understand coast-wide population trends and harvest potential.

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife plans to continue the survey with the goal of expanding sampling to all Delaware River tributaries and Atlantic Coast rivers, obtaining sufficient data to develop a sustainability plan and restoration targets for alewife and blueback herring. 

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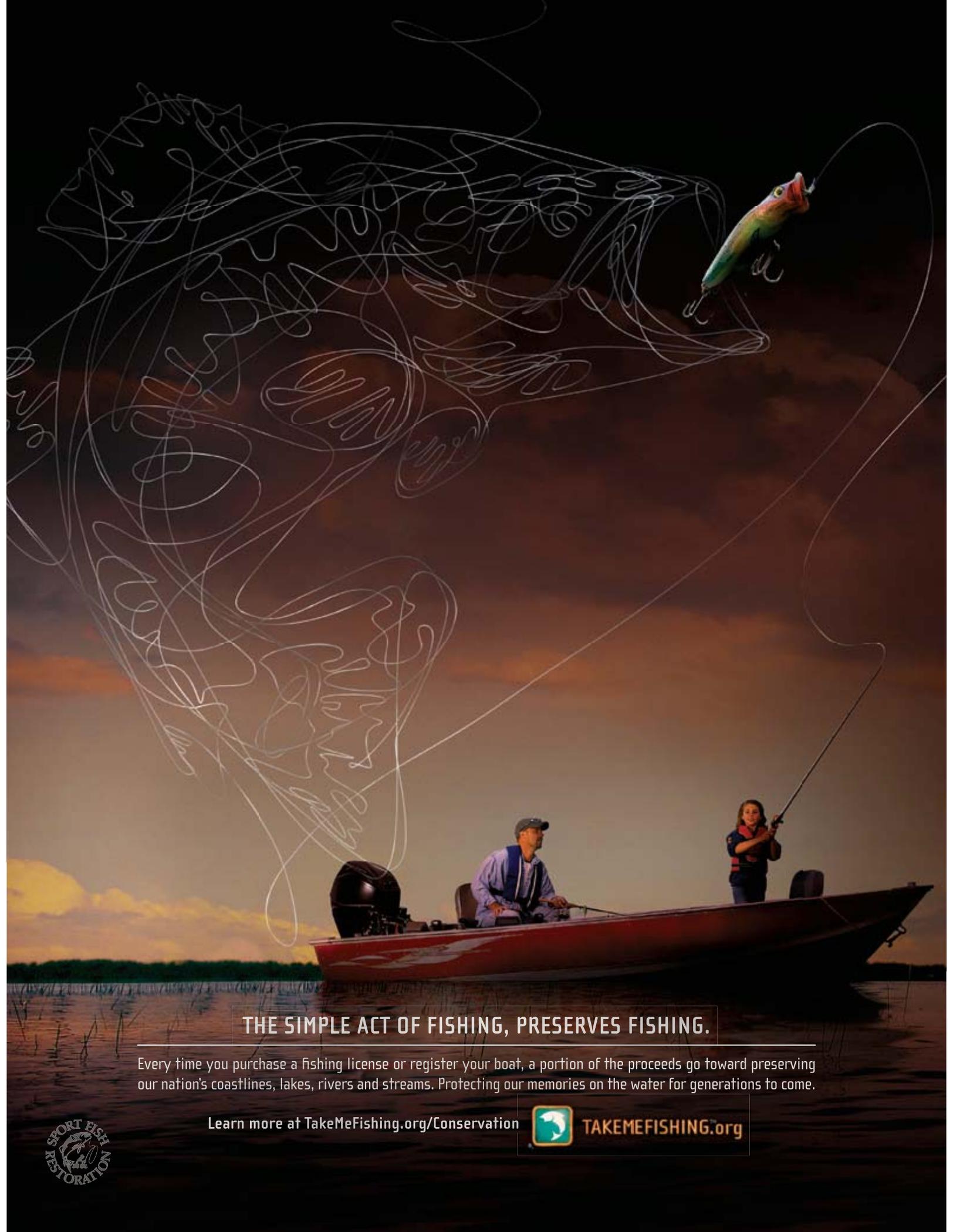
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Lacey High School winners: 1st Place High School Team category

Also, congratulations to Lacey High School for winning first place in the High School Team Category with a 21 7/8-inch bluefish. Lacey High School had their name engraved on the new High School Team Cup and received a 1st place plaque.

All participants who **mailed** their registration were entered into an **early entry raffle** for a Coastline Surf System.

Prizes are awarded in different species and age categories. For more information and to register, visit NJFishandWildlife.com/gsft.htm

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Eastern Oysters of the Delaware Bay

By Russ Babb, Chief, Bureau of Shellfisheries



Fishing vessel Peter R. Paynter harvesting oysters in Delaware Bay as part of a resource enhancement program.

NJDFW/Marine Fisheries Admin.

Introduction

The Eastern oyster, *Crassostrea virginica*, has a long history as a commercially and ecologically important species in the Delaware Bay. Dating back as far as the early 1800s, the Delaware Bay oyster has been known for its unique flavor and high-quality meat, making it extremely popular in the seafood market. Oyster commerce contributed significantly to the bayshore communities of New Jersey and Delaware.

Throughout the early 1900s, oyster landings ranged from one to two million bushels annually. Today, oyster production is severely inhibited by a serious disease: a water-borne protozoan parasite called *Perkinsus marinus*, commonly known as Dermo. Oyster lovers have no fear—the Dermo parasite poses no health concern to human consumers. Dermo was originally detected in the Delaware Bay during the mid-1950s and was associated with imports of the seed oysters from southern states. The disease was essentially undetectable shortly after the cessation of the importing practice.

Unfortunately, this disease—associated with abnormally high winter temperatures—resurfaced in 1990, spreading throughout the oyster population in most of the bay. Although oyster stocks have been significantly impacted by disease, habitat loss and in some cases over-harvesting, the Eastern oyster still remains an integral part of the ecosystem of the Delaware Estuary and the basis of a viable industry.

Where Can We Find the Eastern Oyster?

The filter-feeding Eastern oyster is an estuarine animal with a tolerance for a wide salinity range. The Delaware Bay oyster typically exists in salinities as low as four or five parts per thousand (ppt) and as high as 28 ppt. (Sea water is normally 35 ppt.) However, the optimal salinity range is believed to be about 14–28 ppt.

In the New Jersey portion of the Delaware Bay, oysters are established in areas of suitable habitat

extending along the axis of the estuary from Cape May Point to Artificial Island, and in the brackish or lower portions of many tributaries leading into the Bay. The most productive beds in the Delaware Bay (i.e., currently providing the best recruitment and survival) range from the Cohansey River south to Nantuxent Cove.

Oysters will grow on almost any type of stable bottom available such as hard or sandy mud, clay, gravel and preferably—other oysters. Oysters do not survive well on sandy bottoms that are inclined to be unstable. Likewise, areas adjacent to shifting mud, sand or organic debris are also generally unsuitable as the oysters may become smothered during storm events.

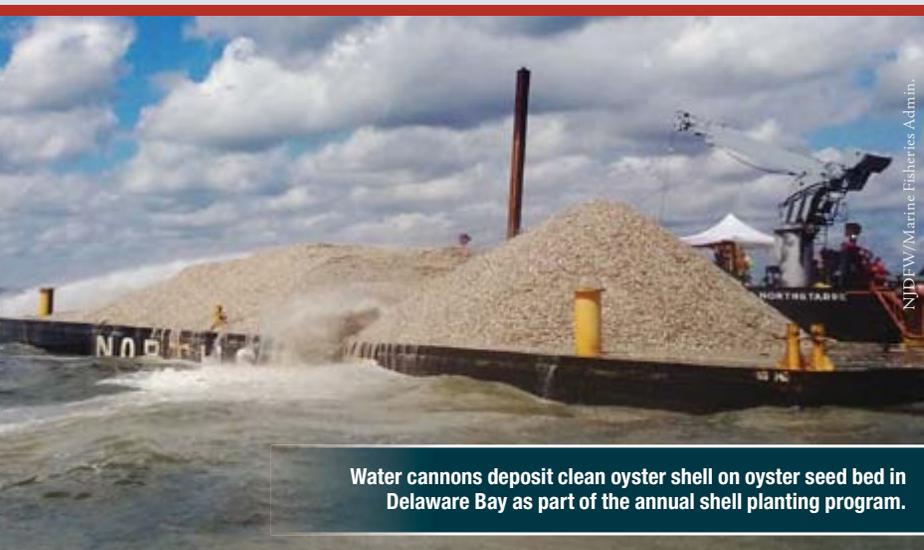
Oysters grow from the intertidal zone to a depth of 30 or more feet. The most productive areas on New Jersey's natural oyster seedbeds and leased grounds range in depth from 6 to 25 feet.

The Mating Ritual

The Eastern oyster is a protandric alternate species as explained by following its path to sexual maturity. When oysters first develop gonads (a reproductive organ that produces sex cells and hormones), the majority are functionally male. As individuals grow larger, many will sexually morph into females. Oysters develop mature gametes and spawn in response to temperature. The first spawning typically occurs in Delaware Bay waters when the temperature reaches 77°F (25°C). Subsequent spawns commonly occur throughout the summer until early-September.

Survival of the Fittest

There is a two-week phase for the free-swimming larvae. During most of this period the larvae are passively transported by tidal and wind driven currents. In a stroke of evolutionary brilliance, during their last few days of larval life, they exhibit a tendency to descend in the water column on slack water, remain on the bottom during ebb tide and return to the water column on flood tides.



Water cannons deposit clean oyster shell on oyster seed bed in Delaware Bay as part of the annual shell planting program.

NJDFW/Marine Fisheries Admin.

In this manner, while late-stage larvae do experience a net movement toward the headwaters of the estuary, they remain in the estuary—not in the ocean where they cannot survive. When they are ready to set, larvae seek a hard, clean surface upon which to attach. Many oyster experts speculate that approximately 95 percent of larvae are lost to predation and other causes of mortality prior to final settlement and attachment. Once a larval oyster finds a substrate upon which to attach, it cements itself to that surface. It will remain there for life unless removed by some external force.

The availability of clean substrate or cultch—preferably oyster shell—is critical for the successful setting of juvenile oysters, at which point they become sessile (permanently attached to the cultch) and are referred to as “spat.”

The NJ Marine Fisheries Administration has a significant shell planting and reef enhancement program. Each July, hundreds of thousands of bushels are planted strategically across the oyster seed beds in an effort to increase recruitment.

If an oyster were lucky to be in the five percent that managed to set, the battle to survive is far from over. Following final settlement and attachment, the newly set oyster has other hazards to face. It is now vulnerable to many new predator threats. A gastropod known as the oyster drill, mud crabs, blue crabs, a flatworm called *Stylochus*, black drum, starfish, skates and rays all take a toll on oysters.

The principal predator in Delaware Bay is the oyster drill, *Urosalpinx cinerea* and *Eupleura caudata*. The abundance of these drills on the downbay market beds can have a significant effect on whether juvenile oysters survive to reproductive maturity. Drills are normally present on the lower beds below Ben Davis Point (higher salinity) and often have a major impact on the productivity of those beds, particularly during periods of drought. Drills have migrated to the upper seed beds of the Bay during prolonged periods of higher-than-normal salinity.

Oyster drills earn their name. These small snails prey on oysters by secreting sulfuric acid that slowly softens the shell. Next, using an organ called a radula, they drill a small hole in the shell, feasting on the soft oyster parts inside. High numbers of drills can decimate healthy oyster beds quickly.

At the peak of the droughts during the 1960s, oyster drills were quite common on the Cohansey and Ship John seed beds which are typically free of these pests due to lower salinities during the egg laying season for drills. The point: it is hard to live the life of an oyster.

Keystone Species

Many marine organisms—bryozoans, hydroids, sponges, barnacles, ascidians, tube-building worms and other bivalves—attach to oysters and the associated structure of their reefs. These fouling organisms, in turn, attract various crustaceans and small fish. This furnishes, as many anglers know, a concentrated food source for a variety of recreationally sought fish such as the weakfish, striped bass, croaker and black drum. Beyond that, numerous animals seek food and shelter in the interstices of oyster reefs, utilizing the oyster community for refuge, foraging and spawning habitat.

In short, oysters and oyster reefs play a critical ecological role in our estuaries and are the basis of a vast community of organisms. Management efforts by coastal states to bolster the oyster resource not only provide major economic benefits for harvesters and local communities, but add to the overall ecology of our estuaries. Healthy oyster reefs increase habitat and faunal diversity and in some cases, at the required scale and location, can even potentially improve water quality by reducing particulates and shifting nutrient dynamics.

A reference list of article resources is available from the Division of Fish and Wildlife by calling (609) 748-2040. 

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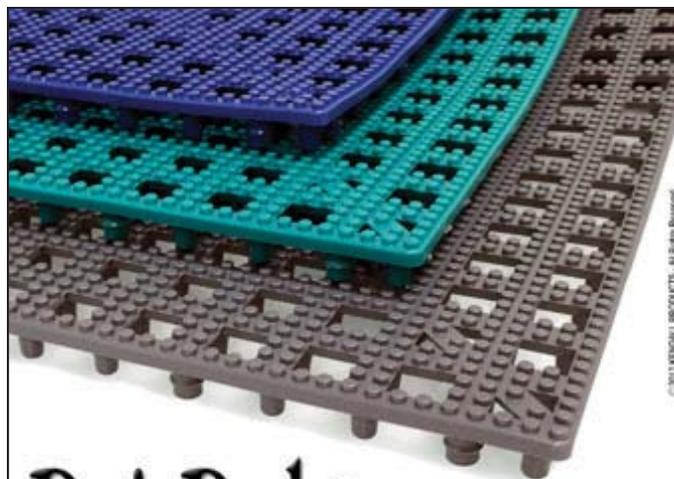
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Regulations in *red* are new this year.

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/njregs.htm#marine or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083. Visit our website at NJFishandWildlife.com.

- **The recreational summer flounder open season has been modified to include May 25 to Sept. 22.** For Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of the COLREGS line which delineates Delaware Bay from the Atlantic Ocean, the size limit remains 17 inches and the possession limit is still three fish. The 17-inch minimum size limit applicable to Delaware Bay does not include the waters of the Cape May Canal east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 inches but less than the 18 inches, may occur in waters east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal to the George Redding Bridge (Rt. 47) located at the entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed and the vessel may not stop to fish for any species. In all other waters, the size limit remains 18 inches, the possession limit is still three fish and transportation of summer flounder less than 18 inches is prohibited.
- **The recreational black sea bass regulations have yet to be finalized. For the most current regulations, see our website at NJFishandWildlife.com/njregs.htm#marine.**
- **The recreational tautog regulations have been modified to include an open season of Aug. 1–Nov. 15 for the third season,** with a one fish possession limit and a 15-inch minimum size limit. Fourth season regulations have been modified to include an open season of Nov. 16–Dec. 31 with a **5 fish possession limit** and a 15-inch minimum size limit.
- **The recreational scup (porgy) regulations have been modified to include an open season of Jan. 1–Dec. 31** with a 50 fish possession limit and a 9-inch minimum size limit.
- **The recreational cobia regulations have been modified to include an open season of June 1–Sept. 30** with a 1 cobia per day, no more than 3 cobia per vessel, possession limit and a 40-inch minimum size limit.

These changes were implemented for New Jersey to remain in compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's management plans for summer flounder, black sea bass, tautog and scup (porgy). The new rules are aimed at providing adequate protection to these fish stocks while allowing New Jersey's saltwater recreational anglers to participate to the fullest extent possible in these various fisheries.

New Jersey recreational marine regulations apply to all fish species when they are possessed in state waters or landed in New Jersey regardless of where they are caught. Saltwater anglers must comply with the requirements of the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program. See page 16.

Resource Information

Anyone who takes fisheries resources may be required to provide information on the species, number, weight or other information pertinent to management of resources. **Anglers are encouraged to report all fishing activity after each trip. Visit Fish and Wildlife's Volunteer Angler Survey at NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.**

Methods of Recreational Fishing

No person shall take, catch, kill or attempt to take, catch or kill any fish within the marine waters of the state by any means except in the manner commonly known as angling with hand line or rod and line unless specifically provided for by statute or regulation.

Delaware Fishing License Requirement

A Delaware fishing license is required for all non-resident anglers aged 16 and over fishing either fresh or tidal waters of Delaware. Delaware fishing license information can be found at <http://www.fw.delaware.gov/Fisheries/Pages/NewFishingLicense.aspx>.

New York Fishing Registry Requirement

New York offers a free registry to all marine anglers fishing in New York. Visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/54950.html>.

Bait Fish

No license is required for the taking of baitfish for personal use with the following gear:

1. Dip nets 24 inches diameter or less for the taking of Atlantic herring only (does not include river herring — alewife and blueback herring) for live bait. **The taking or possession of river herring is prohibited.**
2. Bait seines 50 feet long or less.
3. Cast nets 20 feet in diameter or less.
4. Lift or umbrella nets four feet square or less.
5. Not more than five killipots.
6. Not more than two miniature fykes or pots for the taking of eels for bait.

Fish taken in this manner may not be sold or used for barter unless the angler is in possession of a commercial bait net license.

No person shall take or attempt to take fish by any means from the Deal Lake flume, Lake Takanasse spillway or Wreck Pond spillway on any Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the months of April and May.

Be the First to Know! Get on the List

The Marine Fisheries and Shellfish e-mail list, that is. This free service provides the latest information about Fish and Wildlife events, public hearings and other matters related to marine resources. And there are six other lists to help you get the most out of New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources. **Sign up today.**

Visit Fish and Wildlife's website: NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm

Wanton Waste Prohibited

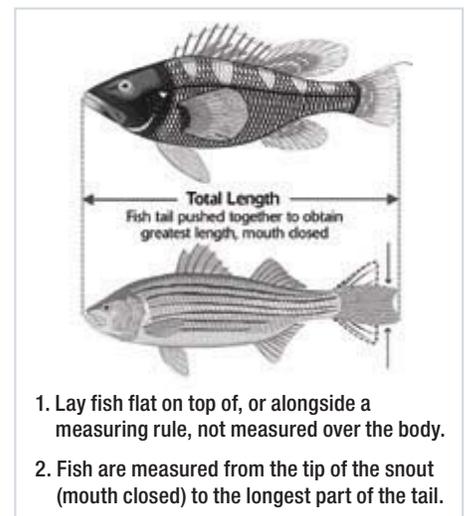
Fish of any species which are purposely killed shall become part of the angler's daily possession limit and shall not be returned to the water from which they were taken. This does not apply to fish which are released alive and subsequently die, but does apply even to species without size/possession limits.

Spearfishing

Spearfishing may be conducted by means of a spear, harpoon or other missile while completely submerged in the marine waters of the state for any species, except lobster.

Persons who fish with a spear for species with size limits are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure the fish meets the minimum size limits before being killed or injured.

Fish Measurement



Prohibited Species

It is illegal to take, possess, land, purchase, or sell any of the following species:

- Atlantic sturgeon
- basking shark
- big eye sand tiger shark
- diamondback terrapin
- sand tiger shark

Accessible Fishing Sites

For people with disabilities, visit: www.NJFishandWildlife.com/sites.htm

An Accessible Fishing Sites list is available to assist anglers whose mobility is impaired. All sites are wheelchair-accessible except for the Musconetcong River in Morris County, where vehicle access is to the shoreline.



The the most up-to-date regulations online.



- sandbar shark
- shortnose sturgeon
- whale shark
- white shark
- river herring (alewife and blueback herring; see herring illustrations, page 18)
- See *Sharks* (page 16) for the full list of prohibited shark species

Sea Turtles & Marine Mammals

It is illegal to intentionally molest, kill or possess sea turtles, including terrapins, or marine mammals, or to possess any part thereof.

Finfish

Regulations for most finfish are listed in the table on page 21.

Filleting

The filleting at sea of all fish with a size limit, or any species of flatfish, is prohibited except for summer flounder; see *Summer Flounder*, page 17. Anglers shall possess no parts of any fish caught on a previous fishing trip. Party boats may fillet fish at sea if they obtain a Special Fillet Permit. Applications

may be obtained from Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries.

Black Sea Bass

Black sea bass are measured along the midline from the snout to the end of the central portion of the tail,

not to include the tail filaments. (See fish measuring example on page 14.) **The 2018 regulations for black sea bass have yet to be finalized.** For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/njregs.htm#marine or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083.

Top 8 Tips for Releasing Fish Unharmd

Proper handling and releasing techniques reduce fish mortality.

- Land fish as quickly as possible, except not when retrieving from depths of 40-feet or more. Fighting a fish to exhaustion increases mortality as does rapidly bringing up a fish through the changing water pressure and temperature gradients.
- Keep fish to be released in the water as much as possible. Plan ahead with tools and camera.
- Minimize physical injury. Do not touch gills or allow fish to flop around on deck.
- Carefully remove hooks using a dehooker or needle-nose pliers.
- Use plain hooks, not stainless, which will rust away quickly if one must be left in a gut-hooked fish. Be prepared with a long-reach tool to cut the leader at the hook. Cut this line close to the hook's eyelet.
- To bring a fish out of the water momentarily, use a neoprene net or one of knotless nylon. Handle the fish carefully using wet hands, wet cotton gloves or similar material to minimize loss of the fish's protective slime layer.
- To revive lethargic fish, hold in a normal, upright position. Move the fish forward in an "S" or figure-8 pattern so that water flows over the gills only from front to back.
- Use circle hooks (not offset) for species that bite and flee, such as striped bass, weakfish or sea bass. Consider pinching hook barbs with pliers.

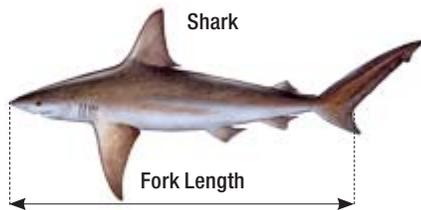
Regulations in *red* are new this year.

River Herring

The taking or possession of any river herring (alewife and blueback herring) in New Jersey is prohibited. See the fish ID illustrations on page 18 for herring species identification.

Sharks

The hammerhead shark recreational size limit is 78 inches fork length (FL). The minimum size limit for authorized shark species of the Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic groups remains at 54 inches fork length **except Shortfin mako at 83 inches fork length**, while all others do not have a size limit. See dogfish Note and measuring illustration for fork length.



The 2018 shark regulations complement existing federal shark regulations (see 2018 Federal Recreational Regulations table, page 22). However, the following additional measures are required for state waters:

- In state waters, there is no minimum size limit for non-blacknose small coastal sharks and blacknose sharks* in the recreational fishery, but federal regulations include a 54-inch minimum size limit for blacknose and finetooth small coastal sharks.

- All sharks within the Aggregate Large Coastal and Hammerhead groups* will have a closed season within state waters from May 15 through July 15 to protect spawning female sharks during the pupping season.

* See page 22 footnote for species list defining shark groupings.

All sharks harvested by recreational fishermen must have heads, tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass until landed. Anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass as long as the tail is not removed. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited.

Recreational anglers should access the following National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/outreach-and-education/shark-identification-placard> to download the NOAA Fisheries Shark Identification Placard, an excellent pictorial guide to identifying sharks that are legal to harvest.

These shark species are prohibited from possession: Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bigeye tiger, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sandtiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white sharks.

Note: To differentiate sharks from dogfish—the smooth dogfish has flat, tiny teeth; the spiny dogfish has strong, dorsal spines, shorter than, and in front of, the dorsal fins along the topline of the shark's back. Neither are present in sharks.

Striped Bass (includes Hybrid Striped Bass)

The possession limit for striped bass/hybrid striped bass is two fish. The size limits are one fish at 28 inches to less than 43 inches and one fish equal to or greater than 43 inches. Anglers participating in the Striped Bass Bonus Program may possess a striped bass at 24 inches to less than 28 inches in length. Fish may be harvested in any order.

It is illegal to take, catch or kill any striped bass from or in any marine waters of this state, by means of a net of any description, or by any methods other than angling with a hook and line or by spear fishing.

It is illegal to possess any striped bass which is less than the legal minimum size of 28 inches unless in possession of a Striped Bass Bonus Permit.

Harvest and possession of striped bass from federal waters (outside three miles) is prohibited.

Sale of striped bass in New Jersey is prohibited.

Striped Bass Closed Seasons

No person may take, attempt to take, or have in possession any striped bass from the following closed waters:

Jan. 1–Feb. 28: All waters closed except the Atlantic Ocean from zero to three miles offshore. All inlets and bays are delineated from ocean waters by a Colregs Demarcation line.

April 1–May 31: Delaware River and Bay and their tributaries closed from the upstream side of the Calhoun St. bridge downstream to and including the Salem River and its tributaries.

Note: Non-offset circle hooks are required to reduce striped bass bycatch mortality while fishing with natural bait during the striped bass springtime spawning area closure within the Delaware River and its tributaries. This restriction does not apply to hook sizes smaller than size 2.

Striped Bass Bonus Program

The Striped Bass Bonus Program will continue this year, where anglers possessing a bonus permit may keep a striper at 24 inches to less than 28 inches. The open season for this program will be September 1 through December 31.

The current allocation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is 215,912 pounds. Should New Jersey exceed this quota, any overage would be subtracted from the following year's quota.

Application Process: Striped Bass Bonus Program permits are issued via mail only. Go to NJFishandWildlife.com/bonusbas.htm to download the application and for regulation or program updates. The permit is non-transferable and valid for the current calendar year. Only one permit can be used per day and harvest reporting is mandatory.

Striped Bass Bonus Permit (SBBP) Harvest Reporting: The SBBP Permit must be securely attached to the fish through the mouth and gill immediately upon capture and prior to transportation. **Harvest reporting is mandatory and must be reported online or by leaving a message at (609) 748-2074.**

New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP)

ATTENTION: New Jersey Saltwater Anglers

REGISTER. You make a difference! It's free, easy and required.

Each state's saltwater registry serves as the contact list for mail and telephone surveys. Complete participation in the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program is crucial for achieving accurate recreational fishing estimates which help to ensure healthy fisheries for the future.

Before you head out to catch your favorite saltwater fish this year, be sure to join the hundreds of thousands of anglers who have already registered with the New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Registry Program (NJSRRP).

Register at the NJ Saltwater Recreational Registry Program site: www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov





The sun sets over Atlantic City as Fish and Wildlife's ocean trawl survey crew heads back to port.

Mike Turner/Volunteer, NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

Summer Flounder (Fluke)

The recreational summer flounder open season has been modified to include May 25 to September 22.

For Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of the COL-REGS line, which delineates Delaware Bay from the Atlantic Ocean, the size limit is 17 inches and the possession limit is three fish. The 17 inch minimum size limit applicable to Delaware Bay does not include the waters of the Cape May Canal east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 inches but less than the 18 inches may occur in waters east of the Cape May Ferry Terminal to the George Redding Bridge (Route 47) located at the entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed and the vessel may not stop to fish for any species. In all other waters, the size limit is 18 inches, the possession limit is three fish and transportation of summer flounder less than 18 inches is prohibited.

Anglers may fillet one legal-sized summer flounder from their daily possession limit catch for use as bait. This carcass, commonly known as the rack, shall be kept intact so it can be measured for compliance with the minimum size limit. Anglers shall not be in possession of any parts of any summer flounder caught on a previous fishing trip; only fish just caught on the current outing.

Shore-based anglers fishing at Island Beach State Park (IBSP) may retain 2 fish greater than or equal to 16 inches (total length) only at IBSP during the current open summer flounder fishing season. Shore-based fishing is defined as fishing from a pier, jetty, beach, bank, or marsh.

Additional Marine Fishing Regulations

See pages 18–19 for the fish ID pages and pages 21–22 for the regulation charts. 

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Motor Boat Registration & Title Requirements NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC)

Registration

Most boats must be registered to operate on New Jersey waterways.

- All titled boats must be registered also.
- **Any boat (including jet skis and non-titled watercraft), mechanically propelled (incl. electric motors), regardless of length, must be registered.**
- Boats greater than 12 feet in length, regardless of propulsion means, must be titled and registered at an MVC office.

Boats and marine equipment which need not be registered:

- Those not based in New Jersey or operating here less than 180 consecutive days that are operating under a federally approved numbering system from another state
- Ship's lifeboats
- Non-motorized vessels used exclusively on small lakes and ponds on private property
- Racing vessels with New Jersey State Marine Police permit
- Non-motorized inflatable device, surfboard, racing shell, dinghy, canoe or kayak
- Non-motorized vessel less than 12 feet in length

Title

For use on New Jersey waterways, all boats more than 12 feet in length must be titled, with the exception of ship's lifeboat, canoe, kayak, inflatable, surfboard, rowing scull, racing shell, tender/dinghy used for direct transportation between a vessel and shore for no other purposes.

Boat Operator License (MVC)

An operator license is required to operate power vessels on fresh, non-tidal waters such as lakes, creeks and rivers. (Minimum age 16 years; with certain exceptions.)

For More Information:

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission

(888) 486-3339 toll free in NJ or (609) 292-6500 from out-of-state www.nj.gov/mvc/vehicles/boating.htm.

Boat Safety Certificate (NJSP)

A boat safety certificate (from an **approved** boat safety course; see NJSP website, below) is required to operate a personal watercraft or power vessel, including electric motors, in NJ waters (tidal and non-tidal).

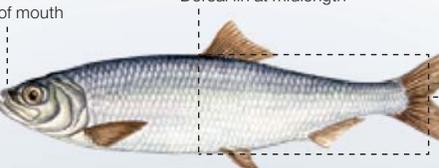
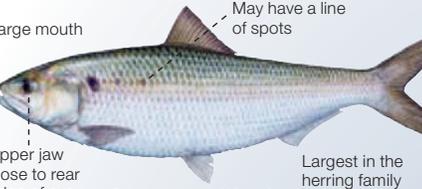
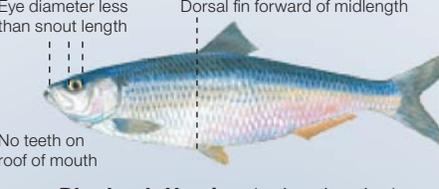
New Jersey State Police (NJSP)

(609) 882-2000
<http://www.njsp.org/marine-services>

Marine Species Identification

MARINE REGULATIONS

Herring

<p>Dorsal fin forward of midlength</p> <p>Eye diameter greater than snout length</p>  <p>No teeth on roof of mouth</p> <p>Deep body</p>	<p>Teeth on roof of mouth</p> <p>Dorsal fin at midlength</p>  <p>Narrow body</p>	<p>Round snout overhangs closed mouth</p> <p>Long, filamentous projection from last ray of dorsal fin</p> 
<p>Alewife (a river herring)</p>	<p>Atlantic Herring</p>	<p>Gizzard Shad</p>
<p>Large mouth</p> <p>May have a line of spots</p>  <p>Upper jaw close to rear edge of eye</p> <p>Largest in the herring family</p>	<p>Eye diameter less than snout length</p> <p>Dorsal fin forward of midlength</p>  <p>No teeth on roof of mouth</p>	<p>Lower jaw projects well beyond upper jaw when mouth closed</p> 
<p>American Shad</p>	<p>Blueback Herring (a river herring)</p>	<p>Hickory Shad</p>

Alewife, American Shad, Blueback Herring and Hickory Shad illustrations ©Duane Raver; Atlantic Herring illustration ©Victor Young/NH. Fish and Game Department; Gizzard Shad illustration courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ©2012.



Striped Bass



Weakfish



Bluefish (Snapper)



Black Sea Bass



Atlantic Croaker



Winter Flounder



Tautog (Blackfish)



Black Drum



Summer Flounder (Fluke)



Red Drum



Blue Crab



Hard Clam



Spot



**Scup
(Porgy)**



White Perch



Northern Searobin



Northern Kingfish



Atlantic Bonito



Cobia



Northern Puffer



**Spanish
Mackerel**



Oyster Toadfish



Atlantic Mackerel



Atlantic Cod



Smooth Dogfish



Spiny Dogfish



Sand Tiger Shark



Sandbar Shark

Regulations in red are new this year.

Crustaceans

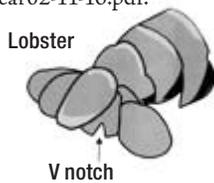
American Lobster

The legal possession size limit of whole lobsters, measured from the rear of the eye socket along a line parallel to the center line of the body shell to the rear of the body shell, shall be not less than 3 3/8 inches nor greater than 5 1/4 inches. Lobster parts may not be possessed at sea or landed. There is no harvest or possession of lobster in Lobster Management Area 4 from April 30 – May 31 and Lobster Management Area 5 from February 1 – March 31.

The possession limit is six lobsters per person. No person shall possess any lobster with eggs attached or from which eggs have been removed or any female lobster with a v-notched tail, as illustrated below.

Special Lobster Restrictions: No person shall use, leave, deploy, or tend any lobster, fish or conch pot within an artificial reef located in state waters except in areas designated as a full access zones. Within these designated full access zones lobster, fish and conch pots shall be used, left, deployed or tended only between sunrise and sunset.

For information about lobster pot deployment and New Jersey Reef Full Access Zone Locations, scan this QR code or go to NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/2016/marlet-reefgear02-11-16.pdf.



The use of spears, gigs, gaffs or other penetrating devices as a method of capture for lobsters is prohibited. A recreational lobster pot license is required to use pots or traps to capture lobsters. For details call (609) 748-2020. Lobsters taken recreationally may not be sold or offered for sale.

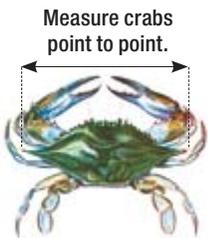
Crabs

1. Crabs may be taken recreationally with hand lines, manually operated collapsible traps or scoop nets without a license. A non-commercial crab pot license is required for the use of not more than two non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 23) or two trot lines to harvest crabs. See page 23 for the non-commercial crab pot license information.

2. It is illegal to harvest or possess more than one bushel of crabs per day per person or offer for sale any crabs without having in your possession a valid commercial crabbing license.

3. Minimum size for crabs that may be harvested (measured from point to point of shell) are as follows:

- Peeler or shedder crab: 3 inches
- Soft crab: 3 1/2 inches
- Hard crab: 4 1/2 inches



- All female crabs with eggs attached and all undersized crabs shall be returned to the water immediately.
- Recreational trot lines shall not exceed 150 feet in length with a maximum of 25 baits.
- All pots and trot lines shall be marked with the identification number of the owner.
- All crab pots must be tended at least once every 72 hours.
- No floating line may be used on any crab pot or crab pot buoy.
- No crab pot shall be placed in any area that would obstruct or impede navigation or in any creek less than 50 feet wide.
- Only the owner or a law enforcement officer may raise or remove contents of a legally set fishing device.
- Crabs taken with a bait seine may be retained for personal use only if the angler possesses a bait net license, and may not be bartered or sold unless the fisherman possesses a commercial crab license.
- No crabs may be harvested from the Newark Bay Complex. For more information, see *Health Advisory* on page 30.
- Crab Pot/Trot Line seasons:** Delaware Bay and tributaries: April 6 – Dec. 4. All other waters: March 15 – Nov. 30. The following waters, **and their tributaries**, are closed to the use of crab pots and trot lines: Cumberland Co.: Cohansey River and creeks named Back, Cedar, Nantuxent, Fortescue, Oranoken and Dividing; Cape May Co.: West and Bidwell Creeks and the Cape May Canal; Atlantic Co.: Hammock Cove (Dry Bay); Ocean Co.: on east shore of Barnegat Bay, that area of Sedge Islands Wildlife Management Area enclosed by a line drawn from the northern bank of Fishing Creek on Island Beach State Park to the northern tip of the Sedge Islands (Hensler Island), then south from point to point along the western side of the Sedge Islands WMA and terminating on the most southwestern point of Island Beach State Park.
- Crab Dredge Seasons:** Delaware Bay and tributaries: Jan. 1 through April 15 and Nov. 15 through Dec. 31. All other waters: Jan. 1 through March 31, Dec. 1 through Dec. 31. Fish and Wildlife will issue a non-commercial crab dredge license for the harvest of not more than one bushel of crabs per day during the crab dredge season. Crabs so taken may not be sold or offered for barter. There is a fee of \$15 for this non-commercial crab dredge license. See page 23 for details on purchasing a non-commercial crab dredge license.

Notice: All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots (see illustration on page 23) must be constructed to include a biodegradable panel designed to create an opening to allow crabs and other organisms to escape if the pot is lost or abandoned. All non-collapsible Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any manmade lagoon or any water body less than 150 feet wide must also include a turtle excluder device inside all pot entrance funnels.

Horseshoe Crabs

The harvest of horseshoe crabs is prohibited. Possession of horseshoe crabs is also prohibited except for those individuals holding a scientific collecting permit for research and education and those fishermen that can provide suitable documentation that the horseshoe crabs in their possession were harvested outside of New Jersey.

Mollusks

- All persons must be licensed to harvest any shellfish. See license information, page 23. Shellfish means any species of benthic mollusks (except conch) including hard and soft clams, oysters, surf clams, bay scallops and mussels.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from condemned waters, even for bait purposes. It is also illegal to harvest shellfish including surf clams from beaches adjacent to water classified as condemned. Shellfish water classification charts are available from license agents or any state shellfish office. See page 23 for shellfish license information. Charts are updated annually.
- Shellfish harvesting is prohibited before sunrise and after sunset. Shellfish harvest is also prohibited on Sundays except in the seasonally approved areas of the Navesink and Shrewsbury rivers, when harvesting is permitted between Nov. 1 and April 30.
- Harvesting shellfish on public grounds is restricted to the use of hand implements.
- It is illegal to harvest shellfish from leased grounds. These grounds are delineated by stakes or buoys set by the lease holder. Charts of the leases may be examined at Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay shellfish offices during regular business hours. Invasion onto leased grounds is punishable by penalties up to \$3,000 and loss of all equipment.

Recreational Shellfishing

- No holder of any recreational shellfish license may take more than a total of 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. See *Shellfish License Information*, page 23.
- It is illegal to dredge shellfish on public grounds. Use of hand implements are the only legal harvest methods.

3. The minimum size of hard clams that may be harvested is 1 1/2 inches in length. Clams less than 1 1/2 inches in length must immediately be returned to the bottom from which they were taken. Specific seasons, regulations and size limits exist for oyster beds in Great Bay, Delaware Bay, plus the Mullica, Great Egg Harbor and Tuckahoe rivers. Check with the nearest shellfish office (Nacote Creek or Delaware Bay) for these detailed regulations.



- Shells taken in the process of harvesting oysters must be culled from the live oysters and returned immediately to the area from where they were taken.

2018 New Jersey Recreational Fishing Seasons, Minimum Size and Possession Limits

Regulations remain in effect until changed. For the most current regulations, go to NJFishandWildlife.com or call the marine fish "listen-only" information line at (609) 292-2083. Regulations in red are new this year. See page 14 for how to measure fish.

Species	Open Season	Minimum Length	Harvest & Possession Limit (per person unless noted)
American Eel ^a	No Closed Season	9"	25
Black Drum	No Closed Season	16"	3
Black Sea Bass	Season closed until 2018 regulations are finalized, anticipated May–June. See page 15.		
Bluefish (Snapper)	No Closed Season	None	15
Cobia	June 1–Sept. 30	40"	1 fish per person; no more than 3 fish per vessel
Cod	No Closed Season	21"	No Limit
Haddock	No Closed Season	18"	No Limit
Pollock	No Closed Season	19"	No Limit
Red Drum	No Closed Season	18"	1 not greater than 27"
River Herring	No Open Season	None	0
Scup (Porgy)	No Closed Season	9"	50
Shad			
Delaware River & tributaries	No Closed Season	None	6 (maximum of 3 American shad)
All Other Marine Waters	No Closed Season	None	6 (no American shad may be harvested or possessed)
Shark^{b, c, †}			
Aggregate large coastal group [†]	Jan. 1–May 14 and July 16–Dec. 31	54" fork length	One Shark (of any species, except prohibited species) per vessel per trip; plus one Atlantic sharpnose shark per person per trip (no minimum size); plus one bonnethead shark per person per trip (no minimum size).
Hammerhead group [†]		78" fork length	
Non-blacknose small coastal group [†]	No Closed Season	None	
Blacknose group [†]			
Pelagic group [†]	No Closed Season	54" fork length	
Shortfin Mako[†]	No Closed Season	83" fork length	
Smooth Dogfish	No Closed Season	None	No Limit
Spanish Mackerel	No Closed Season	14"	10
Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass			
Delaware River & tributaries ^{**} (Calhoun St. bridge to Salem River & tributaries)	March 1–March 31 and June 1–Dec. 31	one @ 28" to < 43" and one ≥ 43"	2
Delaware River & tributaries ^{**} (upstream of Calhoun St. bridge)	March 1–Dec. 31		
Atlantic Ocean ^d (0–3 nautical miles from shore)	No Closed Season		
Rivers, bay and estuaries	March 1–Dec. 31		
3–200 nautical miles (federal waters)	Prohibited	–	0
Summer Flounder (Fluke)			
Delaware Bay and tributaries [‡]	May 25–Sept. 22	17"	3
Island Beach State Park, shore fishing	May 25–Sept. 22	16"	2
All water except as above	May 25–Sept. 22	18"	3
Tautog (Blackfish)	Jan. 1–Feb. 28	15"	4
	April 1–April 30	15"	4
	Aug. 1–Nov. 15	15"	1
	Nov. 16–Dec. 31	15"	5
Weakfish	No Closed Season	13"	1
Winter Flounder	March 1–Dec. 31	12"	2

Note: No species of fish with a minimum size limit listed above may be filleted or cleaned at sea. Party boats licensed to carry 15 or more passengers may apply for a permit to fillet the above species. See **Summer Flounder**, page 17.

Blue Crab

peeler or shedder	No Closed Season ^e	3"	1 bushel
soft	No Closed Season ^e	3½"	
hard	No Closed Season ^e	4½"	
Lobster (carapace length)	See closed seasons on page 20	3¾"	6
Hard Clam (license required)	No Closed Season [‡]	1½"	150 clams

a Except 50 fish harvest/possession limit for party/charter boat employees.

b Not including dogfish; see description on page 16 under **Sharks**.

c See page 14 for a list of **Prohibited Species**.

d Atlantic Ocean greater than three miles from shore: harvest and possession prohibited.

e Unless using non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots, trot lines or crab dredges. See pages 20 and 23.

f Applies to Delaware Bay and tributaries, west of COLREGS line delineating Delaware Bay from Atlantic Ocean but does not include waters of Cape May Canal east of Cape May Ferry Terminal. Transport of summer flounder caught in Delaware Bay, greater than or equal to 17 in. but less than 18 in., may occur in waters east of Cape May Ferry Terminal to George Redding Br. (Rt. 47) located at entrance of Wildwood provided all fishing gear aboard the vessel is stowed with rigs removed; vessel may not stop to fish for any species.

* Excluding tail filaments. (See illustration, page 14.)

** See **Closed Seasons** (page 16) for specifics of springtime non-offset circle hook requirements.

† See page 22 for **Federal Recreational Regulations**.

‡ Non-resident license valid only June – Sept. See water classification chart information on page 23.

Regulations in *red* are new this year.

2018 Federal Recreational Fishing Regulations for Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons

See page 14 for how to measure fish. See *Recreational Minimum Size, Possession Limits and Seasons* (page 21) for state waters listings of species not included in these federal waters regulations (from 3–200nm). For federal regulation questions, please contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (978) 281-9260, or go to www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

Species	Season	Minimum Size	Possession Limit (number per angler per day unless otherwise specified)	Notes
Cod	Year round	22"	10 per person per day	
Striped Bass	NA	NA	No possession allowed in EEZ	Possession prohibited in federal waters (3–200 nm). See pages 16 and 21 for NJ waters.
Dolphin (Mahi mahi)	Year round	None	10 per day, not to exceed 60 per vessel, which ever is less — except on a charter or headboat, then 10 per paying passenger.	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ or call (727) 824-5326.
Marlin, White	Year round	66" lower jaw–fork length	None	Billfish require Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits refer to https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862.
Marlin, Blue	Year round	99" lower jaw–fork length	None	During any sanctioned billfish tournaments offering prize money, non-offset circle hooks are required for lures with natural bait or natural/artificial bait combos.
Roundscale Spearfish	Year round	66" lower jaw–fork length	None	All non-tournament billfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours, either online at https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Sailfish	Year round	63" lower jaw–fork length	None	
Spearfish, Longbill	None	None	Prohibited	For current regulations refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ or call (727) 824-5399.
Tilefish, Blueline	Year round	None	7 per angler per trip	In effect from the Virginia/North Carolina border north.
Tilefish, Golden	Year round	None	8 per angler per trip	
Swordfish	Year round	47" lower jaw–fork length if the head is naturally attached or 25" cleithrum to caudal keel if the head has been removed.	For anglers: 1 per person, no more than 4 per vessel per trip. For charter vessels: 1 per paying passenger, no more than 6 per vessel per trip. For headboat vessels: 1 per paying passenger, no more than 15 per vessel per trip.	Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862. All non-tournament swordfish landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (800) 894-5528.
Tuna, Albacore (Longfin)	Year round	None	None	† Bluefin tuna are managed in two regions; Northern, extending north from the Great Egg Inlet and Southern extending south from Great Egg Inlet. Bluefin tuna retention limits may change throughout the season. Visit https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for current information.
Tuna, Bigeye	Year round	27" curved fork length	None	
Tuna, Bluefin†	Jan. 1–Dec. 31 or until season is closed.	27" to <73" curved fork length and one trophy fish ≥ 73" curved fork length per vessel per year	Limits can change during the season. Prior to departure, check https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or 888-USA-TUNA for up-to-date limits.	All recreational bluefin tuna landings must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (888) 872-8862.
Tuna, Skipjack	Year round	None	None	
Tuna, Yellowfin	Year round	27" curved fork length	3 per person per trip	For current federal waters regulations (3–200nm), refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ or call (301) 713-2347 for swordfish/sharks or (978) 281-9260 for tunas.
Sharks* Aggregate Large Coastal Group Hammerhead Group Non-blacknose Small Coastal Group Blacknose Group Pelagic Group	Year round	Aggregate Large Coastal and Pelagic: Shortfin Mako 83" fork length (may change later in 2018) All others 54" fork length Hammerheads: 78" fork length Other listed sharks: None	For non prohibited species: 1 authorized* shark/vessel/trip plus 1 Atlantic sharpnose and 1 bonnethead shark/person/trip	See below for list of shark groups which MAY be kept or MUST be released. Swordfish, tuna and sharks require an HMS permit when fishing in federal waters (3–200 nm). For permits, refer to https://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call (888) 872-8862. Recreational fishermen (those that do not have a limited access commercial shark permit) can not sell, barter or trade any Atlantic shark or shark pieces.
Wahoo	Year round	None	2 per person per day	For more information, contact the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council at (843) 571-4366.
Wreckfish	July 1 – Aug. 31	None	1 per vessel per day	

***Shark Species That May Be Kept** (Authorized Species): **Aggregate Large Coastal Shark**—blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, tiger, spinner; **Hammerhead Shark**—scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, great hammerhead; **Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Shark**—Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, finetooth; **Blacknose Shark**—blacknose; **Pelagic Shark**—Shortfin mako, blue, porbeagle, oceanic whitetip and common thresher. **Shark Species That MUST Be Released (Prohibited Species):** Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye sand tiger, bigeye sixgill, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean reef, Caribbean sharpnose, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sand tiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, smalltail, whale and white.

Regulations concerning highly migratory species (HMS) such as tuna, swordfish, shark and billfish, are subject to change. Refer to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ for a list of complete federal regulations for highly migratory species. For questions/clarification of the federal highly migratory species regulations, contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at (301) 713-2347 or go to www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

Shellfish License Information

A shellfish license (formerly called clamming license) is required for harvesting all species of benthic mollusks (except conchs, addressed in the commercial marine fisheries regulations), including, but not limited to, hard and soft clams, surf clams, oysters, bay scallops and mussels. Other specific commercial shellfish licenses exist such as surf clam dredge, Delaware Bay oyster dredge boat and Delaware Bay licenses to harvest in Areas 1, 2 and 3.

Anyone engaged in any shellfish harvesting activity with someone holding a commercial shellfish license must also possess their own commercial shellfish license.

For shellfishing regulations, see page 20. **Prior to harvesting any shellfish, you must consult the Shellfish Growing Water Classification Charts** published by DEP's Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring, available at shellfish license agents, state shellfish offices, online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm> or call Marine Water Monitoring at (609) 748-2000. Purchase shellfish licenses online at www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com.

Shellfish License Fees

- **Resident recreational shellfish:** \$10
Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited.
- **Non-resident recreational shellfish:** \$20
Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of catch prohibited. License valid only during June, July, August and September.
- **Juvenile recreational shellfish:** \$2
For persons under 14 years of age. Subject to same restrictions as resident or nonresident adult recreational license holders.
- **Resident commercial shellfish:** \$50
Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers.
- **Non-resident Commercial Shellfish:** \$250
Unlimited harvest. Shellfish may be sold only to certified dealers.
- **Resident senior citizen recreational shellfish license:** FREE lifetime license (\$2 application fee). NJ residents age 62 years or older. Harvest limit: 150 shellfish (in aggregate) per day. Sale of shellfish prohibited.
- **Disabled veterans:** Fish and Wildlife-certified disabled veterans are eligible for free shellfish license at any shellfish license agent location. To become certified, call (609) 984-6213.

- **Recreational crab pot/trot line license:** \$2
Harvest limit: one bushel per day. Refer to the shellfish regulations on page 20 for all recreational crabbing regulations.
- **Non-commercial crab dredge license:** \$15
Harvest limit: one bushel per day during the crab dredge season. See page 20 for recreational crab regulations.

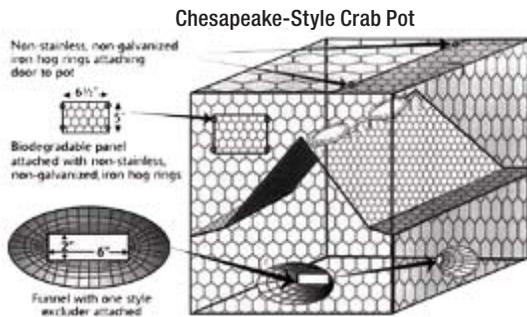
Terrapin Excluders and Biodegradable Panels Are Required on Chesapeake-Style Crab Pots

NOTE: It is illegal to catch or take diamondback terrapins in New Jersey. Users of non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots note: all pots set in any body of water less than 150-feet wide at mean low tide or in any manmade lagoon MUST include diamondback terrapin excluder devices. Non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots set in any body of water MUST include biodegradable panels.

These crab pot modifications will help reduce the unintentional drowning of terrapins allowing these and other species to escape in the event that pots are lost or abandoned. Terrapin excluder devices must be no larger than 2-inch high by 6-inch wide and securely fastened inside each funnel entrance. Biodegradable panels must measure at least 6½-inch wide by 5-inch high and be located in the upper section of the crab pot. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the pot with, wood lath, cotton, hemp, sisal or jute twine not greater than 3/16" diameter, or non-stainless steel, uncoated ferrous metal not greater than 3/32" diameter. The door or a side of the pot may serve as the biodegradable panel ONLY if it is fastened to the pot with any of the material specified above. Crabbers should note: ALL non-collapsible, Chesapeake-style crab pots MUST be licensed and marked with the gear identification number of the owner. For crab pot license information and regulations, see page 20.

Crab Pot License Information

Recreational Crab Pot/Trot Line Licenses and Non-Commercial Crab Dredge Licenses are available for purchase online at: www.NJ.WildlifeLicense.com or at any Fish and Wildlife-certified license agent including those license agents listed below. For the most current list of Fish and Wildlife-certified license agents, go to NJFishandWildlife.com/agentlst.htm.



Shellfish and Non-Commercial Crab Pot License Agents

(For over-the-counter sales only. Call first to be sure the agents licensing system is active.)

ATLANTIC COUNTY

Bass Pro Outdoor World, 30 N. Christopher Columbus Blvd, Atlantic City.... (609) 449-4500
Buck Tails Outfitters, 6390 Harding Hwy, Mays Landing(609) 829-2229
Butterhof's Farm & Home Supply, 5715 White Horse Pike, Egg Harbor City... (609) 965-1198
Lynkris Hometown Hardware, 208 N. Philadelphia Ave., Egg Harbor City.... (609) 965-0815
Lynkris Hometown Hardware, 127, Bellvue Ave, Hammonton (609) 561-1592
Zeus Sporting Goods, 6679 Black Horse Pike, Egg Harbor Twp..... (609) 646-1668

CAMDEN COUNTY

Atco Sports 2209 Atco Ave, Atco. (856) 767-9446

CAPE MAY COUNTY

Avalon Hodge Podge, 2389 Ocean Dr., Avalon (609) 967-3274
Belleplain Supply, 346 Handmill Rd., Belleplain (609) 861-2345
Budd's Bait & Tackle, 109 Fulling Mill Rd., Villas (609) 886-6935
City of Ocean City, 861 Asbury Ave., Ocean City (609) 525-9328
Leisure Travel & Ticket Office, 1 Munroe Ave, Cape May..... (609) 898-6804
Sea Gear Outfitters, Ocean City (609) 884-0330
Sea Isle Bait & Tackle, 4200 Park Rd., Sea Isle City..... (609) 263-6540
United Uniforms, 1050 RT. 47, Rio Grande..... (609) 849-9347
Upper Township, 2100 Tuckahoe Rd., Tuckahoe (609) 628-2805
Wal*Mart, 3159 Rt. 9S, Rio Grande (609) 465-7760

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Greenhorn Outdoors, 1135 Shiloh Pk, Bridgeton (856) 451-0971

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Sportsman's Outpost, 2517 Fries Mill Rd., Williamstown (856) 881-3244

HUDSON COUNTY

Caso's Gun-A-Rama, 176 Danforth Ave., Jersey City..... (201) 435-5099

HUNTERDON COUNTY

The Sporting Life, 653 Highway 22E, Whitehouse Station (908) 923-4332

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Auto Parts of Woodbridge, 108 Main St., Woodbridge..... (732) 634-6264
Sayreville Sportsman Shop, 52 Washington Ave., Sayreville..... (732) 238-2060

MONMOUTH COUNTY

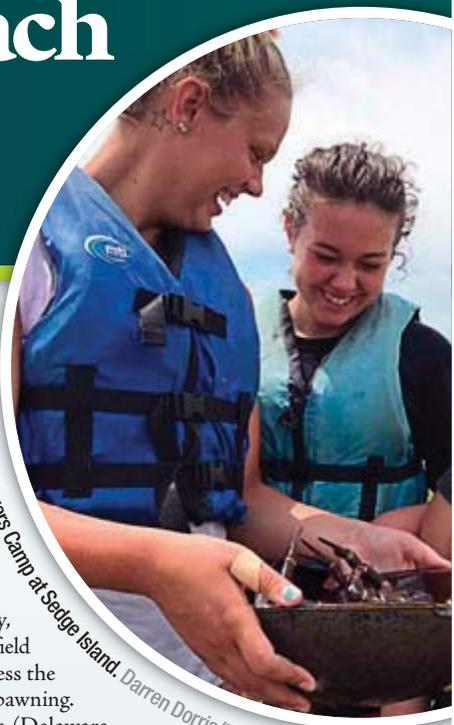
Brielle Bait & Tackle, 800 Ashley Ave., Brielle..... (732) 528-5720

OCEAN COUNTY

BHW Marine Center, Manahawkin..... (908) 240-6109
Cream Ridge Sporting Goods, 465 Route 539, Cream Ridge (609) 758-0616
Creekside Outfitters, 403 Rt. 9, Waretown (609) 242-1812
Downes Marina, 287 Brennan Concourse, Bayville..... (732) 269-0137
Garden State Yacht & Sales, 101 Route 35 South, Pt. Pleasant Beach... (732) 892-4222
Grizz's B & T, 103 Lacey Rd., Forked River (609) 693-9298
Lacey Marine, Forked River (609)693-9052
Pell's Fish & Sport Shop, 335 Mantoloking Rd., Bricktown..... (732) 477-2121
Pineland Sporting Goods, 959 W. Veterans Hwy., Jackson (732) 961-7248
Shooter's Sporting Center, 1535 Route 539, Little Egg Harbor..... (609) 296-4080
Surf City Bait & Tackle, 317 Long Beach Blvd., Surf City..... (609) 494-2333
Tip's Hardware, 218 Main St., West Creek (609) 296-3192
Wal*Mart, 631 Rt. 9 So., Little Egg Harbor..... (609) 296-2430
West Creek Bait & Tackle, 387 Rt. 9, West Creek (609) 857-3516

Shore to Please: Marine Fisheries Outreach and Education Efforts

By: Jennifer Pyle, Senior Biologist, Marine Fisheries and Karen Byrne, Senior Biologist, Education



NJ Audubon Island Explorers Camp at Sedge Island. Darren Dorris/NJ Div. of Fish and Wildlife

A WILD Expo

Did you visit with us at New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's WILD Outdoor Expo? There—and at a growing number of special events—the Marine Fisheries Administration (Marine Fisheries) offers an educational and interactive marine resources display including live specimens of local fish, touchable beach finds, useful promotional giveaways and handouts. In addition, a variety of other marine-related treasures are provided along with videos and posters promoting the real value of fisheries surveys and data collection. Based on our popularity and success at select events, Marine Fisheries is expanding our outreach to a greater variety of events statewide.

Community Outreach on Marine Resources

Biologists have reached out to local schools, environmental groups, boat shows, outdoor sporting events, fishing clubs, youth organizations and other audiences that enjoy the marine waters of the Jersey shore. Since 2012, Marine Fisheries staff has attended more than 20 events, most of which are held annually.

At an Earth Day event for an elementary school, our Marine Fisheries staff captured the students' attention about the importance of protecting wildlife in local waterways through smart recycling practices. School activities are adjusted to the age and curriculum of the students. Students had fun participating in a role-playing activity of saltmarsh species interactions as part of a food chain and learned about coastal predator-prey relationships.

Following a discussion about different marine resource-related education and career options with a group of high school marine science students, staff led four, laboratory-like activities: measuring water quality samples, counting horseshoe crabs, collecting biological data from American eels and aging fish by assessing their scales and otoliths, a structure in the inner ear of vertebrates.

Regional boat shows and fishing clubs are great venues for biologists to highlight their research and to connect with the public about hot topics in the fishing industry. These are also great forums to teach people how fisheries research influences commercial and recreational fishing regulations. With audiences primarily made up of active anglers, staff teach about the effects of barotrauma and the different tools that can be used to minimize damage to live fish. Safe fish handling techniques are just one part of reducing the mortality rates of fish populations.

Green Eggs and Sand in Delaware Bay

In Cape May County, New Jersey, a program is offered for educators interested in teaching their students about the importance of horseshoe crabs. The Green Eggs and Sand workshop takes place on the Delaware Bay, pairing participants with experts in the field as well as getting to the beach to witness the ancient ritual of the horseshoe crabs spawning.

Green Eggs and Sand is a tri-state (Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey) curriculum with activities about the horseshoe crab, its relationship to shorebirds and humans plus how the species is managed. While the workshop is offered only once a year during horseshoe crab spawning season, teachers who attend the workshop can teach about horseshoe crabs all year long.

In 2016, the marine education program partnered with The Wetlands Institute to launch the pilot program of Horseshoe Crabs in the Classroom. Teachers set up a classroom aquarium keeping juvenile horseshoe crabs for an entire school year. Students were involved by learning about water quality importance for horseshoe crabs, while teachers incorporated activities from the Green Eggs and Sand curriculum throughout the school year. This popular and successful program continues to be offered.

Barnegat Bay's Sedge Island

Marine education takes center-stage at New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center. Located off Island Beach State Park in Barnegat Bay, the converted duck hunting lodge offers residential programs for school groups, summer camps, educators and other users of the resource. The Center is completely off-grid, creating the perfect backdrop for teaching the importance of conservation.

Participants learn about the wise use of natural resources through something as simple as turning a light off when you're not in the room (the facility is solar-powered) to deciding how many clams to keep for today's dinner. Living on an island, participants are completely immersed in the salt marsh environment, allowing them to connect with nature by fishing at sunrise or watching the magic of bioluminescent comb jellies at night from the dock.

Fish and Wildlife's marine resource education programs demonstrate the full circle of a food web starting with the importance of submerged aquatic vegetation as habitat—by exploring eelgrass beds with a seine net—then ending with the importance of fishing regulations and an explanation of why certain fish are kept for dinner but not others. The program has participants learn about water quality through shellfish biology, as well as traditional water quality tests.

Marsh walks give participants a chance to understand the salt tolerance of plants and relate this to the impact of sea level rise on New Jersey's marshes. Participants departing Sedge Island leave with a deeper understanding of New Jersey's marine environment, with real-life changes they can make in their life to help conserve the natural resources they explored in the program at Sedge Island.

See page 31 for more details about Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center programs.



Pequest Open House. Jen Pyle/NJ Div. of Fish and Wildlife



WILD Outdoor Expo. Jen Pyle/NJ Div. of Fish and Wildlife

Sedge Island Fishing Experience.



Darren Dorris/NJ Div. of Fish and Wildlife

Getting Involved

Do you have an upcoming special event or a classroom full of students interested in learning about New Jersey's marine resources? Are you part of a fishing club looking to learn more about resource management strategies behind marine fish regulations? Are you a curious youth who would love to experience a guided exploration of salt marsh life in our coastal bays? Are you an educator whose students would be intrigued to learn about the fascinating, primitive and highly important horseshoe crab? New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's biologists are ready to present our programs for your group.

To invite the Marine Fisheries staff to visit your school, group or outreach event, contact Jen Pyle at (Marine Fisheries, Jennifer.Pyle@dep.nj.gov) or Jenny Tomko (Shellfisheries, Jenny.Tomko@dep.nj.gov or call at (609) 748-2020.

For more information about Sedge Island programs or the Green Eggs and Sand Workshop, contact Karen Byrne at Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov or (609) 748-4347. 



Marine Fisheries: Recreational Surveys

Make Each Fishing Trip Count

Have you been intercepted yet? The Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) is in its 3rd year of being conducted by New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Fisheries personnel. You may see our interviewers at marine public access fishing sites throughout New Jersey. The survey targets marine recreational anglers to obtain information about fishing effort, catch and participation. The more fishing catch data collected, the more successful this survey becomes for estimating overall catch, a crucial data component on which fisheries managers depend.

Along with increased outreach at public events, our Marine Fisheries staff are offering to talk with fishing clubs/groups about the importance of the APAIS. We rely heavily on our valued anglers, creating a joint venture to preserve New Jersey's natural resources. Contact Maryellen Gordon at (609) 748-2020 for us to come to your meeting or event. We look forward to meeting you!

If you're not "intercepted" for an interview while fishing or contacted through the Saltwater Registry, you can still participate by submitting a fishing report after each saltwater trip to the New Jersey Volunteer Angler Survey. Your reports do have a real impact on how New Jersey's ocean resources are managed. Submit online reports at www.NJFishandWildlife.com/marinesurvey.htm.

To catch more information about the value to managing your fisheries resources, be sure to see the featured article from a recent Marine Digest at <http://www.NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/2016/digmar6-13.pdf>.



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Skillful Angler Recognition Program

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

The Skillful Angler Program is designed both to supplement the New Jersey Record Fish Program and to acknowledge that many anglers catch freshwater and marine fish that are not record size but are still worthy of recognition because the size and weight of the fish sufficiently tested the angler's skill. Open to resident and non-resident anglers. All fish must be caught in New Jersey waters using a hook and line during legally open seasons.

Saltwater species taken from a boat must have been caught from a boat that left from, and returned to, a New Jersey port during the same trip.

New in 2018, anglers can submit their application and photo(s) electronically! Program rules and steps to enter are found here <http://njfishandwildlife.com/skflang.htm>. Anglers qualifying for a Skillful Angler



award receive a certificate **along with a Skillful Angler patch** as a testament to their achievement. The Program has three main divisions: **Adult** (for anglers age 16 and older), **Junior** (under age 16) and **Catch and Release** (based on length). A **clear, side-view photo that allows accurate species identification must be included with each application**. Additional good quality (and high resolution) photos with the angler are welcome and appreciated.

The Skillful Angler Program recognizes different levels of fishing expertise. An angler who submits five applications of qualifying size for the same species will receive a Specialist Certificate and patch. An angler who submits five applications of qualifying fish of different species will receive a Master Certificate and patch. Catch 10 or more qualifying species of fish within the year, and the angler will earn an Elite Angler Certificate and patch.

For new anglers, the Program also recognizes your first fish caught *no matter the age of the angler*. Qualified anglers will receive a First Fish certificate. There are also four "Slam" categories — an Inshore Slam 1, Inshore Slam 2, Offshore Pelagics Slam and Marlin Slam. For the Inshore Slam 1, an angler must submit qualifying applications for a striped bass, bluefish and fluke. For the Inshore Slam 2, an angler must submit qualifying applications for black sea bass, tautog, and weakfish. The Offshore Pelagics Slam will be obtained if an angler submits qualifying applications for bluefin tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna and dolphin. For the Marlin Slam, an angler must submit qualifying applications for a white marlin and a blue marlin.

New!

Email your entry and photo from any device!

Each month, the leaders of each category and species will be posted on our Skillful Angler Leader Board web page. At the end of the year, special recognition is given to anglers who catch the largest fish in each species category. The winner of each category is sent a special certificate recognizing his/her accomplishment along with a **winner's patch** as the best of New Jersey's Skillful Anglers.

Fish must be measured from the tip of the nose (with mouth closed) to the tip of the tail. For catch and release categories, the fish must be measured and photographed alongside a ruler. For Adult/Junior Division, fish must be weighed and measured by a fishing license agent, tackle shop or authorized Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologist.

Anglers must submit a photograph of the fish caught, alongside a ruler for clear identification and measurement verification. Be sure the rule markings are legible. All photos become the property of the NJDFW and may be used for promotional purposes. 

To apply, go to:

NJFishandWildlife.com/pdf/skflangapp-salt.pdf.

Minimum Entry Requirements:

Species	Adult Weight (lbs., oz.)	Junior Weight (lbs., oz.)	Catch & Release (inches)
Black Sea Bass	4	3	20
Striped Bass	40	36	42
Black Drum	70	63	46
Bluefish	18	16	33
Cod	30	27	42
Dolphin	30	27	n/a
Winter Flounder	2	1 lb., 8 oz.	16
Fluke	8	7	27
Kingfish	1	8 oz.	13
Mako Shark	250	225	n/a
Blue Marlin	400	360	n/a
White Marlin	60	54	n/a
Pollock	25	22 lbs., 8 oz.	41
Tautog	8	7	22
Albacore Tuna	50	45	n/a
Big Eye Tuna	200	180	n/a
Bluefin Tuna	500	450	n/a
Yellowfin Tuna	120	108	n/a
Tuna (other)	250	225	n/a
Weakfish	10	9	30

The New Jersey State Record Fish Program requires a separate application and is based on weight alone. Scale certification documentation and a weighmaster's signature are necessary. Other rules apply. Visit Fish and Wildlife's website at NJFishandWildlife.com for a complete list of current state records. See also page 28.

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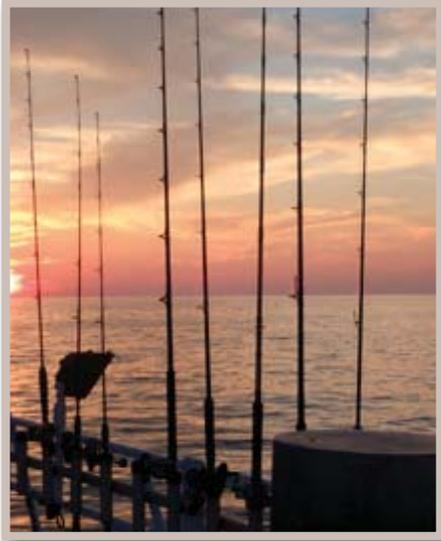
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State Record Marine Sport Fish

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS



New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Record Fish Program honors anglers who catch the largest of select species of freshwater and saltwater fish. Record size is based on weight alone; there are no line classes. Currently there are 76 marine species eligible for entry into the program which includes a new spearfishing category with 17 additional species.

Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found on or off the coast of New Jersey. The original list of 72 species was pared down with that objective in mind.

Twelve species are now retired from the list of program-eligible fish, but remain on a separate list posted on Fish and Wildlife's website. One historical catch is also retired and posted on the list.

Anglers should be aware of the procedure in effect for entering the Record Fish Program. First, separate applications are required for freshwater and saltwater species. Second, for saltwater entries, it

is now mandatory that a marine biologist inspect any potential record fish, as identification solely by photo is not always accurate. Anglers must call Fish and Wildlife's Nacote Creek Research Station at (609) 748-2020 to make arrangements for inspection. In most instances, the fish must be transported to this office in Port Republic. However, in the case of extremely large fish (i.e., shark and tuna), a biologist should be available to travel for dockside inspection. Note that all scale certification requirements still apply, including a valid Certificate of Inspection/Test Report and current Registration Certificate issued by the County Office of Weights and Measures.

The entry deadline is now no later than one month after the date of catch.

For a complete list of state record fish or to print an application with complete program rules, visit the Division of Fish and Wildlife's website at NJFishandWildlife.com/fishing.htm. 

New Jersey State Record Marine Fish

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Amberjack, greater	85	0	1993	Edwin Metzner	Off Cape May
Bass, black sea	9	0	2015	Steve Singler	Atlantic Ocean
Bluefish	27	1	1997	Roger Kastorsky	5 Fathom Bank
Bonito, Atlantic	13	8	1945	Frank Lykes, Jr.	Off Sandy Hook
Cobia	87	0	1999	John Shanchuk	Off Sea Bright
Cod	81	0	1967	Joseph Chesla	Off Brielle
Crab, blue	8¾" pt. to pt.		2008	Raymond Ponik	Bayonne
Croaker, Atlantic	5	8	1981	Frederick Brown	Delaware Bay
*Cunner	3	2.4	2015	Jorge Antonio Costa	Mud Hole
Dogfish, smooth	19	11.2	2013	Michael J. LaTorre, Jr.	Sculls Bay
Dogfish, spiny	15	12	1990	Jeff Pennick	Off Cape May
Dolphin	63	3	1974	Scott Smith, Jr.	Baltimore Canyon
Drum, black	109	0	2008	Nick Henry	Delaware Bay
Drum, red	55	0	1985	Daniel Yanino	Great Bay
Eel, American	9	13	1988	Warren Campbell	Atlantic City
Fluke	19	12	1953	Walter Lubin	Off Cape May
Flounder, winter	5	11	1993	Jimmy Swanson	Off Barnegat Light
Hake, red (Ling)	12	13	2010	Billy Watson	Off Manasquan
Hake, white	41	7	1989	Wayne Eble	Off Barnegat Light
Kingfish, Northern	2	8	2004	Chester Urbanski	Barnegat Bay
Mackerel, Atlantic	4	1	1983	Abe Elkin	Manasquan Ridge
Mackerel, king	54	0	1998	Fernando Alfaiate	Off Cape May
*Mackerel, Spanish	9	12	1990	Donald Kohler	Off Cape May
Marlin, blue	1,046	0	1986	Phil Infantolino	Hudson Canyon
Marlin, white	137	8	1980	Mike Marchell	Hudson Canyon
Perch, white	2	12	1998	Michael King	Little Beach Creek
*Pollock	46	7	1975	John Holton	Off Brielle
Porgy	5	14	1976	Victor Rone	Delaware Bay
Sailfish	43	4	2006	Dr. John Tallia	Linden Kohl Canyon
Seatrout, spotted	11	2	1974	Bert Harper	Holgate Surf
Shad, American	7	0	1967	Rodger West	Great Bay
Shad, hickory	2	13	2011	Robert Macejka	Mantoloking

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Shark, blue	366	0	1996	William Young, Jr.	Mud Hole
Shark, bull	Vacant (Minimum Weight 150 lbs.)				
Shark, dusky	530	0	1987	Brian Dunlevy	Off Great Egg Inlet
Shark, hammerhead	365	0	1985	Walter Thackara	Mud Hole
Shark, porbeagle	Vacant (Minimum Weight 100 lbs.)				
Shark, s-fin mako	856	0	1994	Christopher Palmer	Wilmington Canyon
Shark, thresher	683	0	2009	Bennett Fogelberg	Fingers
Shark, tiger	880	0	1988	Billy DeJohn	Off Cape May
Sheepshead	19	3	2014	William Catino	Longport
Spadefish	11	6	1998	Cliff Low	Delaware Bay
Spearfish, longbill	42	0	1989	George Algard	Poor Man's Canyon
	42	0	1997	Joseph Natoli	Hudson Canyon
Spot	0	13	2003	Robert Belsky, Jr.	Little Sheepshead Creek
*Striped bass	78	8	1982	Al McReynolds	Atlantic City
Swordfish	530	0	1964	Edmund Levitt	Wilmington Canyon
*Tautog	25	5.92	2015	Frank LaMorte	Atlantic Ocean
Tilefish, golden	63	8	2009	Dennis Muhlenforth	Linden Kohl Canyon
Tilefish, gray	23	4	2015	Mark Milici	Linden Kohl Canyon
Triggerfish, gray	6	11	2016	James Massimino	Sea Girt Reef
Tuna, albacore	77	15	1984	Dr. S. Scannapiego	Spencer Canyon
Tuna, big-eye	364	14	1984	George Krenick	Hudson Canyon
Tuna, bluefin	1,030	6	1981	Royal Parsons	Off Pt. Pleasant
Tuna, skipjack	13	4	1999	Craig Eberbach	Wilmington Canyon
Tuna, yellowfin	290	0	1980	Wayne Brinkerhoff	Hudson Canyon
Tunny, little	24	15	1977	Mark Niemczyk	Off Sea Bright
Wahoo	123	12	1992	Robert Carr	28-Mile Wreck
Weakfish	18	8	1986	Karl Jones	Delaware Bay
Whiting (silver hake)	Vacant (Minimum Weight 2.5 lbs.)				

* Fish was previously certified by the IGFA as a world record.

For information concerning the New Jersey State Record Fish or Skillful Angler programs, visit the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's website at NJFishandWildlife.com.

New Jersey State Record Marine Fish – Spearfishing Category

In 2014, the NJ Record Fish Program expanded with the addition of a Spearfishing category for saltwater. Seventeen (17) species commonly sought after by spearfishers are part of the Program. Spearfishers now have a unique opportunity to be recognized in New Jersey's Record Fish Program. Anglers are reminded that the objective of the Record Fish Program is to increase the awareness of fishing opportunities for species that are regularly sought and routinely found in or off the coast of New Jersey.

Species	Lbs.	Oz.	Year	Angler	Where Caught
Amberjack, greater	Min. Wt. 60 pounds			VACANT	
Bass, black sea	Min. Wt. 5 pounds			VACANT	
Bluefish	22	2	2017	Igor Kotov	Shark River Reef, USS Algol
Cobia	60	0	2015	William Maier	Off Cape May
Cod	Min. Wt. 50 pounds			VACANT	
Dolphin	Min. Wt. 40 pounds			VACANT	
*Fluke	15	5	2014	Robert A. Davis	Off Barnegat Lighthouse
Flounder, winter	3 pounds	5	2016	Chris Kahler	Manasquan Inlet
Hake, red (ling)	Min. Wt. 9 pounds			VACANT	
Pollock	Min. Wt. 30 pounds			VACANT	
Porgy	Min. Wt. 4 pounds			VACANT	
Sheepshead	Min. Wt. 12 pounds			VACANT	
Spadefish	Min. Wt. 9 pounds			VACANT	
Striped bass	Min. Wt. 55 pounds			VACANT	
*Tautog	23	14	2007	Luke Dylan Hickey	Off Cape May
Triggerfish, gray	Min. Wt. 3.5 pounds			VACANT	
Weakfish	11.8	n/a	2009	Tai Menz	Off Cape May

* Fish was recognized by the International Underwater Spearfishing Association as a world record.



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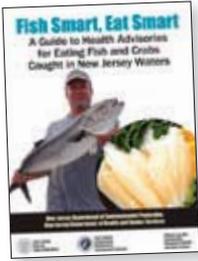


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Jersey waters. Fish consumption advisories have been adopted to guide citizens on safe consumption practices.

To reduce exposure to harmful chemical contaminants when preparing and eating the fish species taken from the identified waters, it is essential to follow the guidelines provided. The DEP encourages you to consult the Fish Smart-Eat Smart Fish Advisory Guide or, for a complete list of state and federal marine fish consumption advisories visit www.FishSmartEatSmartNJ.org for making decisions about eating recreationally caught fish and crabs. 

Try the Interactive Map!

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New Electronic Reporting Required of For-hire Fisheries Vessels

Starting **March 12, 2018**, electronic vessel trip reporting will be required for all vessels issued a GARFO charter/party permit for any of the following species when carrying passengers for hire:

- Summer Flounder
- Black Sea Bass
- Squid
- Bluefish
- Scup
- Atlantic Mackerel
- Butterfish
- Tilefish, golden & blueline



NOAA FISHERIES

Electronic reports must be completed prior to entering port and submitted within 48 hours through a NOAA-approved software application following the completion of a fishing trip. For more information, contact Daniel Luers (978-282-8457) or Daniel.Luers@noaa.gov or visit GARFOs recreational fishing web page: <https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/recfishing/>

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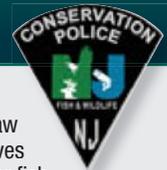
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- **Bay to Bowl:** A 3-day 2-night program open to adults interested in harvesting food from the bay and learning how to prepare and cook it.

For more details, dates and cost visit NJFishandWildlife.com/sedge.htm or contact Karen Byrne at Karen.Byrne@dep.nj.gov.



Law Enforcement and Regulation Information



Contact a New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife Law Enforcement office that serves the county where you hunt or fish.

- **Northern Region — (908) 735-8240** (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren counties)
- **Central Region — (609) 259-2120** (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties)
- **Southern Region — (856) 629-0555** (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties)
- **Marine Region — (609) 748-2050** (coastal and bay areas)
- **To report violations anonymously call Operation Game Thief — (855) OGT-TIPS**

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Hunter Education	(877) 2-HUNT-NJ
Land Management	(856) 629-5006
Law Enforcement (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties)	(856) 629-0555
Wildlife Control (Now at Nacote Creek office.)	(609) 748-2044
Pequest Natural Resource Education Center	(908) 637-4125
Pequest Trout Hatchery	(908) 637-4173
605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863	
For questions concerning state stocking programs or comments call (908) 236-2118	
Hackettstown Fish Hatchery (15 Warmwater/Coolwater Species)	(908) 852-3676
23 Reese Ave., Hackettstown, NJ 07840	
For questions concerning state stocking programs or comments call (908) 236-2118	
Nacote Creek Research Station	
P.O. Box 418, 360 Rt. 9 N. (Milepost 51) Port Republic, NJ 08241	
Marine Fisheries	(609) 748-2020
Marine Fisheries "Listen Only" regulation information line	(609) 292-2083
Shellfisheries	(609) 748-2040
Marine Education	(609) 748-4347
Marine Law Enforcement	(609) 748-2050
Delaware Bay Office (Marine and Shellfisheries)	
1672 E. Buckshutem Rd. Millville, NJ 08332	(856) 785-0730

Publications Available

The following publications are available by writing:

Nacote Creek Research Station Publications
P.O. Box 418
Port Republic, NJ 08241

Shellfish Growing Waters Classification Charts

This publication is available free at any shellfish license agent and online at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/bmw/waterclass.htm>.

The following publications are also available online at NJFishandWildlife.com:

- **Guide to New Jersey Saltwater Fishing** (available online only)
- **New Jersey Boaters Guide**
- **Party and Charter Boat Directory** (available online only)

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